

HOUSE RESOLUTION 62

By Turner L

A RESOLUTION to celebrate Washington Chapel CME Church's annual Men's Day fellowship event on March 11, 2007.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should recognize those venerable religious institutions and their congregations who, through their unflagging capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, strive to enrich the lives of the people in their communities; and

WHEREAS, the good people of the Washington Chapel CME Church comprise one such estimable congregation, who will be celebrating the Church's annual Men's Day fellowship event on March 11, 2007; and

WHEREAS, the celebration will be a time of reflecting on the past, giving thanks for the present, and joyfully looking forward to a future filled with spiritual goodness; and

WHEREAS, Washington Chapel CME Church was founded more than ninety-five years ago in the West Junction area of Memphis; and

WHEREAS, in those humble beginnings a small group of community leaders met in a cramped storefront building; they created a union of Christian fellowship which later came to be known as Washington Chapel Colored Methodist Episcopal Church; and

WHEREAS, although the church's beginnings may have been modest, the church leaders' hopes and aspirations were grand: they dreamed of a new beginning for spiritual, academic, and economic growth for the church and the community, and they had visions for the fulfillment of their goals and the purpose of the church; and

WHEREAS, with the swelling of the church, many outstanding men and women joined the congregation, paving the way for future spiritual success, leadership, and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, church leaders were faced with the dilemma of figuring out how to nurture the increasing needs of a congregation outgrowing its space; Reverend Clarence Smith, formerly of Stax Records, was assigned the pastorage from 1975 to 1979, and through his ministry of music, the church members were motivated to work for future developments; and

WHEREAS, in the early 1980s, under the leadership of Reverend Wm. R. Johnson, church members embarked on a quest to find a site and a location more conducive to their congregation's size; and

WHEREAS, in the 1990s, under the leadership of Reverend L. L. Barnes and Sister Lucille Barnes, the church grew and prospered in the musical department when under the musical direction of Mr. Tony Black, the church moved to a digital instrument of spiritual divine music; and

WHEREAS, church members have always strived to meet the needs of their community and in 1991, Reverend Wm. Smith initiated an Alcohol and Drug Program; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, State Representative Rufus E. Jones, Sr., the son of Mrs. Ida Mae Crawford Jones who, at the age of 92, is still active in the church, donated \$30,000 to Washington Chapel to enhance the development of the church ministries; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend Willie Ward, Jr., the current pastor, has served his congregation with acumen and alacrity for almost ten years: throughout his tenure, he has been a proponent of using the Bible during worship services, thus encouraging members to read and share in his sermons; and

WHEREAS, in response to continued growth, the members of Washington Chapel CME Church, under Rev. Ward's leadership, welcomed its new home on Mitchell Road in March 2006, a far cry from the humble storefront property that housed its members almost a century ago; and

WHEREAS, in paying homage to its past and with an eye always toward the future, the men of Washington Chapel celebrate each year, with a Men's Day Program, all of the men who have helped to make Washington Chapel CME Church a religious organization of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, the members of this exceptional congregation should be aptly honored for their exemplary service to their fellow Christians and to the good people of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we hereby honor the congregation of Washington Chapel CME Church for their many years of unwavering dedication, estimable service, and spiritual inspiration to their community and join with them as they celebrate their annual Men's Day fellowship event on March 11, 2007.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.